

In the Claims

A complete listing of all claims presented in application serial number 09/786,546 follows:

1. (previously presented) A gaming method comprising, but not necessarily in the order shown:

a. determining a plurality of game parameters comprising:

(i) odds of winning a primary wagering game;

(ii) odds of obtaining a bonus game qualifying event in the primary wagering game;

(iii) odds of winning a plurality of bonus prizes, the plurality of bonus prizes comprising an incrementing jackpot, the odds of winning the plurality of bonus prizes being dependent on the odds of winning the primary wagering game and the odds of obtaining the bonus game qualifying event;

b. requiring at least one player to place a wager on the primary wagering game;

c. conducting a round of the primary wagering game with the at least one player;

d. designating the at least one player as a winner if the at least one player has a predetermined arrangement of indicia resulting from completion of the round; and

e. providing an opportunity for the winner to randomly win one of the plurality of bonus prizes, and in the event that the randomly chosen bonus prize is the incrementing jackpot, terminating the incrementation of the incrementing jackpot, and awarding the incrementing jackpot to the winner.

2. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the incrementing jackpot is a progressive jackpot based on a percentage of a total amount of the wagers placed.
3. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the incrementing jackpot is a time-based
5 jackpot which increments a predetermined amount at predetermined time intervals.
4. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the incrementing jackpot increments within a predetermined range of amounts from a minimum to a maximum jackpot.
- 10 5. (previously presented) The method of Claim 4, wherein the incrementing jackpot remains at the maximum jackpot upon so reaching until the incrementing jackpot is won.
6. (previously presented) The method of Claim 4, wherein the incrementing jackpot returns to the minimum jackpot after reaching the maximum jackpot and continues incrementing
15 until the jackpot is won.
7. (original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the minimum and maximum jackpots are calculated by first calculating an amount for a fixed jackpot, then creating a range around the fixed jackpot defined by the minimum and maximum jackpots which satisfies a
20 predetermined payback percentage, the average of values within the range being substantially equal to the fixed jackpot.

8. (original) The method of Claim 7, wherein the setting of the minimum and maximum jackpots includes determining how often and by what amount the incrementing jackpot increments.
- 5 9. (previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the method is conducted with a plurality of players at a plurality of individual primary gaming devices which are electronically linked together to a common jackpot display showing the current amount of the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot on the common jackpot display being visible to the players at the gaming devices, and configured such that when a player
10 from any of the primary gaming devices wins the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot can be stopped from incrementing at the respective gaming device.
10. (previously presented) The method of Claim 9, wherein the step of providing an opportunity for the winner to win one of the plurality of bonus prizes which is randomly
15 selected utilizes a device chosen from the set consisting of a rotatable segmented prize wheel, an alternately lighting display case, a plurality of boxes, and an animated character racing device.
11. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the incrementing jackpot is shown on a
20 display that can be stopped from incrementing upon winning of the incrementing jackpot.
12. (previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of providing an opportunity for the winner to win one of the plurality of bonus prizes that is randomly selected utilizes a device chosen from the set consisting of a rotatable, segmented prize

wheel, an alternately lighting display case, a plurality of boxes, and an animated character racing device.

13. (previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the primary wagering game
5 comprises a card game, and wherein the step of designating the at least one player as a
winner if the at least one player has a predetermined arrangement of indicia upon
completion of the round utilizes indicia displayed on one or more cards dealt to the at
least one player.

10 14. (original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the card game is blackjack.

15. (original) The method of Claim 13, conducted in a live form on a card table with a human
dealer and using one or more decks of conventional playing cards.

15 16. (original) The method of Claim 13, conducted in virtual form on video screen using one
or more decks of virtual playing cards.

17. (previously presented) The method of Claim 13, wherein the method is conducted with a
plurality of players at a plurality of individual card tables electronically linked together to
20 a common jackpot display showing the current amount of the incrementing jackpot, the
incrementing jackpot on the common jackpot display being visible to the plurality of
players at the card tables, and configured such that when a player from any of the card
tables wins the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot can be stopped from
incrementing at the respective card table.

18. (previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the primary wagering game comprises a slot machine, and wherein the step of designating the at least one player as a winner if the player has a predetermined arrangement of indicia upon completion of the round utilizes the indicia displayed on one or more reels of a slot machine as a result of the step of playing the slot machine.

19. (original) The method of Claim 18, conducted using an electro-mechanical slot machine having generally cylindrical reels that are rotatable.

20. (original) The method of Claim 18, conducted in virtual form on a video screen using a virtual slot machine having a plurality of virtual reels.

21. (previously presented) The method of Claim 18, wherein the method is conducted with a plurality of players at a plurality of individual slot machines electronically linked together to a common jackpot display showing the current amount of the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot on the common jackpot display being visible to the players at the individual slot machines, and configured such that when a player from any of the slot machines wins the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot can be stopped from incrementing at the respective slot machine.

22. (previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:

(a) if the at least one player wishes to have the opportunity to play the bonus game, requiring the at least one player to place a side wager separate and distinct from the wager on the primary wagering game; and

(b) wherein the step of designating the at least one player as a winner if the at least one player has a predetermined arrangement of indicia upon completion of the round occurs only if the at least one player placed the side wager.

23. (previously presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the method is conducted with a plurality of players at a plurality of individual gaming devices that are electronically linked together to a common jackpot display showing a current amount of the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot on the common jackpot display being visible to the players at the gaming devices, and configured such that when a player from any of the gaming devices wins the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot can be stopped from incrementing at the respective gaming device.

24. (previously presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the primary wagering game comprises a card game, and wherein the step of designating the at least one player as a winner if the at least one player has a predetermined arrangement of indicia upon completion of the round utilizes indicia displayed on one or more playing cards dealt to the at least one player.

25. (previously presented) The method of Claim 24, wherein the step of providing an opportunity for the winner to randomly win one of the plurality of a bonus prizes comprises providing the winner an opportunity to activate a jackpot button which causes

a segmented prize wheel to spin and randomly stop on one of a plurality of segments indicating a prize won.

26. (original) The method of Claim 25, wherein the prize wheel includes five fixed jackpots
5 and one incrementing jackpot.

27. (previously presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the primary wagering game
comprises a slot machine, and wherein the step of designating the at least one player as a
winner if the at least one player has a predetermined arrangement of indicia upon
10 completion of the round utilizes the indicia displayed on one or more reels of a slot
machine as a result of the step of playing the slot machine.

28-50 (cancelled)

15 51. (previously presented) A gaming method comprising, but not necessarily in the order
shown:

(A) determining odds of a game of chance having a primary game, a bonus game, and
an incrementing jackpot awardable in the bonus game, the determination of the
odds comprising:

20 (a) determining odds of events occurring in the primary game including:

(i) determining odds of obtaining at least one winning outcome on the
primary game;

(ii) determining odds of a bonus qualifying event occurring;

(b) determining odds of events occurring in the bonus game including:

- (i) determining odds of winning each of a plurality of bonus game prizes;
 - (ii) determining odds of winning the incrementing jackpot;
 - (c) determining parameters for the incrementing jackpot including:
 - 5 (i) determining a starting amount of the incrementing jackpot;
 - (ii) determining a contribution rate for the incrementing jackpot;
 - (iii) determining an increment rate of the incrementing jackpot, wherein the odds of primary game events, the odds of bonus game events, and the incrementing jackpot parameters are
 - 10 interdependent;
 - (B) allowing a player to place a wager;
 - (C) adding a portion of the wager to the incrementing jackpot;
 - (D) allowing the player to play the primary game;
 - (E) determining a primary game outcome;
 - 15 (F) if the primary game outcome comprises the bonus qualifying event, allowing the player to play the bonus game;
 - (G) determining a bonus game outcome, at least one bonus game outcome entitling the player to the incrementing jackpot;
 - (H) if the bonus game outcome entitled the player to the incrementing jackpot,
 - 20 awarding the player the incrementing jackpot.
52. (previously presented) The gaming method of claim 51, wherein step (A)(c) further comprises determining the target amount of the incrementing jackpot.

53. (previously presented) The gaming method of claim 51, wherein step (A)(c) further comprises determining a maximum incrementing jackpot amount.

54. (previously presented) The gaming method of claim 51, wherein the increment rate is
5 based on a percentage of a total amount of wagers placed.

55. (previously presented) The gaming method of claim 51, wherein the increment rate is time-based and increments at predetermined time intervals.

10 56. (previously presented) The gaming method of claim 51, wherein the incrementing jackpot increments within a predetermined range of amounts from a maximum to a minimum amount.

15 57. (previously presented) The method of claim 56 wherein the incrementing jackpot remains at the maximum until won by the player.

58. (previously presented) The method of claim 56, wherein the incrementing jackpot returns to the minimum amount after reaching the maximum amount without being awarded to the player.

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59. (previously presented) The gaming method of claim 56, wherein the minimum and maximum incrementing jackpots are calculated by first calculating an amount for a fixed jackpot, then creating a range around the fixed jackpot defined by the minimum and maximum jackpots which satisfies a predetermined payback percentage, the average of

the incrementing values within the range being substantially equal to the amount of the fixed jackpot.

60. (previously presented) The method of claim 56, wherein the setting of the minimum and maximum incrementing jackpots includes determining how often and by what amount the incrementing jackpot increments.

61. (previously presented) The method of claim 51, wherein the method is conducted with a plurality of players at a plurality of individual games of chance electronically linked together to a common jackpot display showing the current amount of the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot on the common jackpot display being visible to the players at the gaming devices and configured such that when a player from any of the games of chance wins the incrementing jackpot, the incrementing jackpot can be stopped from incrementing at the respective gaming device.

62. (previously presented) The method of Claim 51, wherein the incrementing jackpot is a progressive jackpot based on a percentage of a total amount of the wagers placed.

63. (previously presented) A gaming device comprising:

- (A) a primary game of chance apparatus configured to allow at least one player to place a wager and present a game of chance having a primary game outcome, the primary game outcome comprising awarding at least one prize, the primary game outcome further comprising at least one bonus qualifying event;
- (B) a bonus game of chance apparatus adapted to present the at least one player with a

bonus game if the primary game outcome comprises the bonus qualifying event, the bonus game of chance apparatus having a randomly determined bonus game outcome, the bonus game outcome comprising awarding a plurality of bonus prizes, at least one bonus prize comprising an incrementing jackpot;

- 5 (C) a game controller in communication with the primary game of chance and the bonus game of chance, the game controller comprising game outcome odds comprising odds for awarding the at least one prize in the primary game, odds for obtaining the at least one bonus qualifying event, odds for awarding the plurality of bonus prizes in the bonus game, and odds for winning the incrementing
10 jackpot, wherein the game outcome odds are interrelated.

64. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, wherein the game controller is programmable to set a minimum and a maximum value for the incrementing jackpot.

- 15 65. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, wherein the incrementing of the jackpot is progressive based on increasing a predetermined percentage of a total amount of wagers placed.

66. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, wherein the incrementing of the
20 jackpot is time-based and increments the incrementing jackpot at predetermined time intervals.

67. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, wherein the game controller is configured to automatically stop incrementing the incrementing jackpot when the bonus

game outcome comprises the incrementing jackpot.

68. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, further comprising an input device connected to the game controller, the input device being hand-operable to manually stop the incrementing of the incrementing jackpot after the bonus game outcome comprises the incrementing jackpot.

69. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, the bonus game of chance apparatus comprising a rotatable, segmented prize wheel.

70. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, the bonus game of chance apparatus comprising a rotatable, segmented prize wheel, a jackpot button, and a motor operatively connected to the segmented prize wheel, the jackpot button being hand-operable to cause the segmented prize wheel to spin by means of the motor, wherein the segmented prize wheel may stop on one of a plurality of segments of the segmented prize wheel to indicate the bonus game outcome.

71. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, further comprising a jackpot display operatively coupled to the game controller for displaying the value of the incrementing jackpot.

72. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 71, wherein the game controller is adapted to be in communication with a plurality of game devices such that the incrementing of the jackpot display stops when a bonus game outcome of any of the

plurality of game devices comprises the incrementing jackpot.

73. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 63, wherein the primary game of chance apparatus comprises a gaming table for playing card games.

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74. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 73, the bonus game of chance apparatus comprising a display comprising a wheel built into the gaming table.

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75. (currently amended) The gaming device of claim ~~62~~3 wherein the primary game of chance apparatus comprises a slot machine.

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76. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 74 wherein the slot machine comprises an electro-mechanical slot machine having generally cylindrical rotatable reels.
77. (previously presented) The gaming device of claim 74 wherein the slot machine comprises a video gaming device having a plurality of virtual reels shown on a video screen.